

Bahai Nest. Mount Carmel
Haifa Syria

August 29th 1914

Dear friends!

Another article from the pen of our brother Badi Bushru'i will carry us a little further into the complicated question of the present war on the Continent of Europe. He writes :-

"The present condition of affairs, the battle waged between huge armies, the moving of millions of soldiers from the peaceful homes into the field of carnage, the relentless pursuit of animal greed by the so-called civilized nations of the West, afford ample reason for one to feel somewhat pessimistic. Ever since the appearance of man upon the face of the earth and his attempt to use his mind in the amelioration of his environment, the Divine Virtues, spiritual blessings, good-will towards all men, freedom and peace, happiness and joy have been poured upon the human race through the unerring efforts of sages, philosophers and prophets and it is rather astonishing to find what a striking similarity exists between the humane thoughts and sentiments of the leaders of all races and nationalities and religions.

"Practically all of them have been playing the same musical note: good-fellowship, loving-kindness, generosity and truthfulness. It is this unity of Principles that has led some men such as Henry Thomas Buckle to conclude that since the code of morals is stationary when compared with the intellectual progress of man, then by the logical method of concomitant variation the real mover of the wheel of progress is the intellectual power of man. We do not for the present, attempt to refute this argument but we desire to bring out the fact that there is a unity and constancy in all the fundamental teachings intending to establish the organization of Society.

"Go over the pages of history in the rise and progress of any nation and you are sure to find that after all it is the same still small voice which stimulates the souls and minds of great men and powerful geniuses. Volumes of books have been written, all of them full of teachings and instructions. Why then, it may be asked, man is still negligent and always tries to assert his pugnacity by cutting the throat of his brother? How many dynastic and religious wars waged and how much innocent blood shed? Yes, we are saturated with theories in regard to our conduct but when we are asked to put them

in practice we fall short. Why such indifferent pusillanimity permitted?

"Infinite Wisdom has established the order of things. Man, the noblest of all creation is a mirror reflecting the Divine attributes and through this Great Force he is able to dominate all the natural forces. But very often he forgets the Absolute Cause and thus retrogresses and becomes bereft of the high sentiments of humanity. We have had many great leaders with noble ideas but because ^{their} method of instruction has not been perfect they have failed to hit the mark: their plans have come to naught and the mass of mankind to the neglect of these principles, is still imbued with bloodthirstiness, rapacity and war. Hence the many confusions and the present diabolic struggle.

"What we need, therefore, is a good method of instruction. We need the Archtypal Man, who being the Collective Centre of all the virtues of humanity, devise laws and systems that will make an everlasting impression upon the formative mind of the race. May we not then look ^{around} for such a Person?

"The highest type of creation and the dawning-place of the Sun of Truth in this age, we assert, is His Holiness Baha - allah. He is the universal Teacher of mankind.

He has formulated such laws and regulations as will satisfy the demands of the time. Many of such tenets may be said to have been in former dispensations but they are new in the sense that they have been re-stated with a new meaning and the spirit of God is behind them. One of His Teachings is the inculcation of education in all the grades of Society. This is the law and the prophet and every true believer has to obey it literally. Such being the case the lofty ideas of the past generations will be taught to the rising youths who in turn will enrich them through the addition of their own valuable experiences and hand them over to their posterity. We might very well conclude, therefore, that human kind is not lagging behind but always pressing onward. One writer says that human progress like a spiral. It is always moving forward.

Therefore, it is for the Baha'is to infuse a new life into the body of the world which might result in the creation of a new hope and aspiration; that every soul forgetting what has been his career in the past might forge ahead with a new vigor and a fresh start.

This age of ours may be called the age of synthesis. We always delve into the constituents of things and deduce

new theories and principles. Let us, then, study the ideas of the past and see whether the principle of the unity of human and the Unity of the Force behind it, holds true or not. The basis of our progress lies in the ideas of the former sages and philosophers. It was only a few days ago that as I was reading over some selections from the voluminous French writer, Buffon, I came across ^{one} of his beautiful pieces entitled Nature. How its contents is applicable to the present state of affairs in Europe generally and France particularly and the aftermath of this devastating war! In a concise, clear and ~~thrilling~~ style he describes the beauty of nature, the glory of the sun, the crystal sea, the transparent atmosphere and the habitable crust of the earth. Then he points out the superiority of man over all the lower Kingdoms of life, his capability to manipulate the resources of nature and his ability to render every disagreeable thing agreeable. But amidst this glorious activity a sudden change comes upon him and consequently he uproots the trees planted with his own hands and suffers the display of the forces of destruction. Then towards the end he says: -

" ' However, he (man) rules only right of Conquest, and enjoys rather than possesses. He can only retain by

ever-renewed efforts. If these cease, everything languishes, changes, grows disordered, enters again into the hands of Nature. She retakes her rights; effaces man's work; covers his most sumptuous monuments with dust and mass; destroys them in time, leaving him only the regret that he has lost by his own faults the conquests of his ancestors. These periods during which man loses his domain, ages of barbarism when everything perishes are always prepared by wars and arrive with famine and depopulation. Man who can do everything except in numbers, and is only strong in union, only happy in peace, has the madness to arm himself and to fight for his own ruin. Incited by insatiable greed, ambition, he renounces the sentiments of humanity, turns all his forces against himself, and seeking to destroy his fellows, does indeed destroy himself. And after these days of blood and carnage, when the smoke of Glory has passed away, he sees with sadness that the earth is devastated, the arts buried, the nations dispersed, the races enfeebled, his own happiness ruined and his power annihilated. "

Another quiet meeting was held this afternoon, the Master visiting the Holy Family and then speaking for a few minutes about the purity of human heart and how the degree of his sincerity became evident, even before he opens his tongue and speaks.